# Otley Run goes ahead in Leeds just a week after crossbow attack



In the wake of a tragic incident in Leeds, the Otley Runners displayed resilience by participating in the town’s famed 19-pub crawl just one week following a violent attack. On Saturday, Owen Lawrence, a 39-year-old resident of Headingley, opened fire with a crossbow, injuring two women aged 19 and 31 along the route of the Otley Run before fatally wounding himself.

The event unfolded as scores of celebrants adorned in elaborate costumes and fancy dress descended on the streets of Leeds for the traditional social gathering, which spans approximately two and a half miles. Many participants were dressed in playful costumes, including characters from popular culture, as they imbibed in a lighthearted atmosphere despite the previous week’s harrowing events.

Fortunately, both women who were shot survived the ordeal, with one remaining in stable condition in hospital, while the other was discharged shortly after. Witness accounts highlighted that the community's spirit remained upbeat as they took to the streets, with groups forming vibrant showcases of costumes ranging from traffic cones to characters from Doctor Who and Harry Potter.

This celebration of camaraderie sharply contrasts with the violent incident that marred the community just days prior. Lawrence had reportedly expressed intentions on social media that suggested a premeditated attack targeting young individuals participating in the pub crawl, drawing inspiration from extremist ideologies linked to other violent events globally. In the aftermath, counter-terror police confirmed that Lawrence was the sole suspect in the matter and reassured the public that there was no ongoing threat.

In personal reflections, local students shared how the attack impacted their sense of safety and awareness. Art student Jess Anderson expressed her concerns, stating, "It has brought it close to home that there is actually a rise in violence against women." Similarly, fellow student Christi King noted an increased vigilance in her surroundings since the incident.

Lawrence's social media posts revealed deeply troubling beliefs, closely aligning with far-right ideologies. He had commented on a documentary that featured instances of school violence and was found to have glorified the actions of known extremists. His chilling declaration of intent included specific targets and a detailed account of his planned assault, drawing inspiration from past attacks, particularly the Christchurch massacre.

Despite the grim context surrounding the event, participants of the Otley Run appeared undeterred as they celebrated in a spirited manner, showcasing the ability of communities to come together in the face of adversity. The juxtaposition of the joyful festivities and the serious nature of the preceding events served as a stark reminder of the complex realities faced by many communities today.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4nnn80gl71o> - This article discusses the Otley Run, a 19-stop pub crawl along Otley Road in Leeds, highlighting its popularity among students and the controversies it has sparked among residents due to antisocial behavior.
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7222xwz0v0o> - This piece covers The Golden Beam pub's consideration to change its license to accommodate Otley Run participants, reflecting the event's impact on local businesses and the community.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/aug/21/leeds-drunken-otley-run-goes-from-high-spirits-to-public-menace> - This article examines the shift in demographics of Otley Run participants, noting an increase in older male groups arriving by coach, leading to concerns about public urination and sexual harassment.
4. <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/people/older-male-groups-who-arrive-by-coach-are-causing-issues-with-public-urination-and-sexual-harassment-on-otley-run-meeting-hears-3935899> - This report highlights issues arising from older male groups arriving by coach for the Otley Run, including public urination and sexual harassment, and the council's response to these problems.
5. <https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/lifestyle/food-and-drink/the-otley-run-leeds-pictures-of-the-17-stops-featured-on-the-famous-bar-crawl-for-punters-in-2025-4947115> - This article provides an overview of the 17 stops featured on the Otley Run in 2025, detailing the pubs along the route and their significance to the event.
6. <https://www.leeds-live.co.uk/best-in-leeds/restaurants-bars/calls-iconic-leeds-otley-run-24366875> - This piece discusses calls to 'scrap' the Otley Run due to concerns over antisocial behavior, public urination, and sexual harassment, and the actions being taken to address these issues.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14675477/Defiant-Otley-Runners-famous-19-pub-beer-crawl-week-fanatic-tried-massacre-youngsters-crossbow.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data